



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

May 9, 2006

W. Douglas Scamman, Jr.
Speaker of the House, Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 1426, an act granting a right-of-way over state-owned land and exempting certain terrestrial invasive plant species from the invasive species list.

Dear Speaker Scamman:

The purpose of this letter is to comment on the amendment that was recently added to HB 1426 on the floor of the Senate. The amendment proposes to exempt certain invasive plant species from the New Hampshire terrestrial invasive species list. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) does not support this amendment.

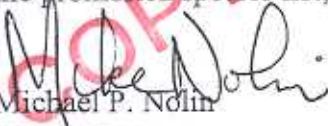
The New Hampshire Invasive Species Committee (ISC) established pursuant to RSA 430:54 has worked for five years to systematically review terrestrial species that pose known and potential harm to the viability of New Hampshire's landscape. The ISC is represented by experts from the various state agencies (including DES), academia, and members at large from the public that are involved in environmental issues in the state. The ISC recommended to the Commissioner of Agriculture, Markets & Food that the barberries, Norway maple, and burning bush be included on the State's list of invasive species that present the potential for environmental or economic harm and that they be subject to a phased-in ban beginning in 2008.

Following a rigorous review through criteria established by the ISC, the four species that are proposed for exemption from the prohibited species list are the ones that have already demonstrated the ability to colonize areas outside of those landscaped areas where they were intentionally introduced. Each been documented in natural habitats where they are forming dense stands and thickets that are impeding wildlife migration patterns and altering the structure of the forest community that is signature to the New Hampshire landscape.

The ISC worked closely with the New Hampshire Growers Association and other such organizations to understand the importance of these particular species to the industry, and to also educate both the growers and the public about the threats these species pose. There are many alternative species that have been shown to be suitable substitutes for these species that are slated for prohibition, and the growers have agreed to carrying those, and to deplete their stocks of the above referenced species within the agreed upon timeframe.

There is good science behind the Commissioner's decision to prohibit these four invasive species. Legislative action to exempt these species will place New Hampshire's natural landscape in jeopardy.

Please reconsider the proposed amendment to exempt these four known invasive species from the prohibited species list, and remove the amendment from the bill text of HB 1426.


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cc: Governor John H. Lynch
Senator Clegg
Representative Chandler
Senator Gatsas
Representative Bouchard
Representative Brueggemann
Representative MacKay
Representative Reardon
Representative Babson
Representative O'Connell
Stephen Taylor, Commissioner, Dept of Ag
Exotic Species Program, NH DES